

IN THE CLAIMS

1. (currently amended) A method for identifying a gene ~~having a role in~~ which may be involved with the presentation of diabetic nephropathy, which method comprises

culturing mesangial cells in a medium in the presence of transforming growth factor β 1 (TGF- β 1) and a concentration of glucose sufficient to induce differential expression of gene susceptible to such differential expression;

and identifying the gene so induced by suppression subtractive hybridization.

2. (original) A method according to Claim 1, wherein the mesangial cells are cultured in the presence of a concentration of glucose sufficient to induce up-regulation of a gene susceptible to such up-regulation.

3. (previously amended) A method according to Claim 1, wherein the concentration of glucose is greater than 5 mM.

4. (previously amended) A method according to Claim 1, wherein the mesangial cells are subjected to mechanical strain.

5. (cancelled)

6. (previously amended) A method according to Claim 1, wherein the possibility of differential expression due to hyperosmolarity is excluded.

7. (currently amended) A method according to Claim 1, wherein the gene so differently expressed is a gene of SEQ ID NO:1 which ~~includes a sequence selected from the group consisting of:~~

~~1) SEQ ID NOS: 1-3;~~

~~2) SEQ ID NO:4;~~

~~3) SEQ ID NO:5; and~~

~~4) SEQ ID NO:6.~~

8. (previously amended, withdrawn) Use of a gene identified by a method according to Claim 1, as a diagnostic marker for the progression and presentation of diabetic nephropathy.

9. (previously amended, withdrawn) Use of a gene identified by a method according to Claim 1, as an index of disease activity and the rate of progression of diabetic nephropathy.

10. (previously amended, withdrawn) Use of a gene identified by a method according to Claim 1, as a basis for identifying drugs for use in the prevention and/or therapy of diabetic nephropathy.

11. (currently amended) A An isolated gene encoded by a
sequence of SEQ ID NO:1 ~~selected from any one of SEQ IDS NOS:1 3, 5~~
~~and 6 according to Claim 7.~~